to provide life-cum-accident insurance, money back, pension and superannuation benefits. The worker is required to contribute Rs. 1/- per day or Rs. 365/- per year and the contribution of the Government is Re. 2/ - per day or Rs. 730/- per year per worker. According to reports received from LIC about two lakh agricultural workers have been covered under the scheme as on 31.1.2003.

Workers engaged in asbestos cement products

3053. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of a recent survey, conducted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which states that asbestos is responsible for death of a lakh of workers annually across the world;

(b) if so, the number of workers at present engaged in manufacturing of asbestos cement products in the country; and

(c) the steps taken by Government for protection of workers at workplace from exposure to asbestos?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) The Government have not received any such report from International Labour Organisation (ILO).

(b) As per the details collected by Labour Bureau, Shimla about 8321 workers are engaged in the manufacture of asbestos cement and other cement products.

(c) The manufacture, handling and processing of asbestos and tis product has been brought under the category of hazardous processes as given in the First Schedule under the Factories Act, 1948 and thus the provisions under Chapter IV-A of the Factories Act relating to hazardous processes become applicable to this class of industry.

The State Government have framed rules under Section 87 and Schedule on Handling and Processing of Asbestos, Manufacture of any Article of asbestos and any other process of manufacture or otherwise in which asbestos is used in any form has been notified by them on the

basis of Model Rules prepared by Directorate General, Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI).

Workers' representation on the board of companies

3054. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:
SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to make workers' representation on the board of companies, mandatory;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when;

(c) whether a law for the purpose would be enacted in the current session of Parliament and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the proposed legislation would cover all the units covered under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) No decision in this regard has been taken so far.

(b) to (e) Do not arise in view of answer to (a) above.

Interest rate on EPF

3055. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to cut the rate of interest on EPF;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such a cut would adversely affect the employees' future financial security for their families;

(d) if so, whether any alternative has been evolved to compensate the loss; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?